INFESTED: THE ROAD TO SPIDER ISLAND

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

MARVEL

659

Slott
Caselli
Gracia

PLUS:SPIDEY MEETS GHOST RIDER
BY WILLIAMS AND GARBETT

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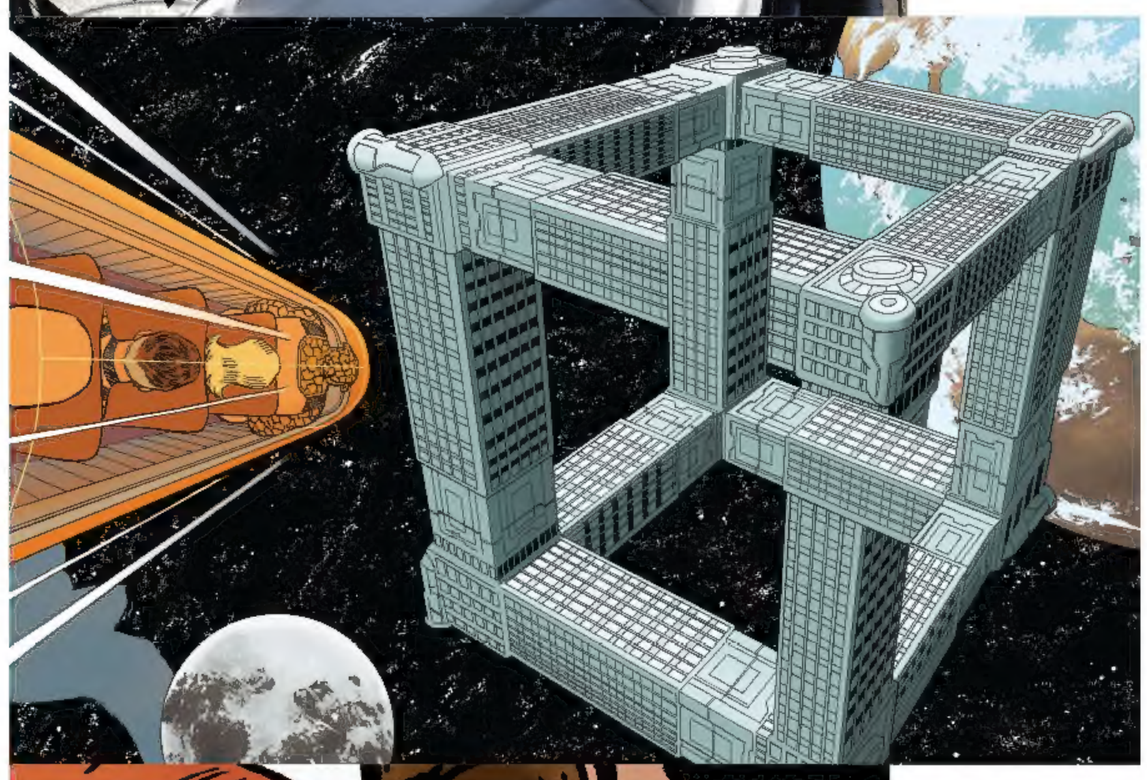

THE HUMAN TORCH HAS DIED.
HE ASKED SPIDER-MAN TO TAKE HIS PLACE.
BUT THE FANTASTIC FOUR IS NO MORE.
WELCOME TO TOMORROW.
WELCOME TO THE FUTURE FOUNDATION.

FANTASTIC VOYAGE PART 1 OF 2

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The Caribbean. Earth-616.
(A.K.A. THE MARVEL UNIVERSE)

KKRRRBBEEEKKKRRRCCCLL

HOME SWEET HOME!

DIMENSIONALLY IF NOT GEOGRAPHICALLY, THAT IS...

YOU'D THINK THAT'D MEAN I COULD GET A CLEAR SIGNAL TO THE BAXTER BUILDING, BUT IT KEEPS DROPPING--

I'M HAVING THE SAME TROUBLE WITH MY SATELLITE FEED, SUE.

SURE SIGN, I'D SAY, WE'RE NEARING THE EPICENTER OF THE DIMENSIONAL ANOMALIES THE FUTURE FOUNDATION HAS BEEN TRYING TO STEM...

I'LL SET THIS TUB DOWN, THEN--TRYIN' NOT TO FLATTEN ANY BATHIN' BEAUTIES IN THE PROCESS!

NEXT STOP: PARADISE!

VALERIA! FINALLY!

I'LL SAY! I'VE BEEN TRYING TO REACH YOU FOR HOURS, MOTHER!

DID YOU RECEIVE THE COORDINATES I SENT? USING QUADRANGULATION ALONG THE X, Y, Z AND THETA AXES I BELIEVE I'VE CALCULATED THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE RADIATING DIMENSIONAL BREACH!

YEESH! I THOUGHT NEXT TO REED I WAS THE SECOND-MOST GENIUSY PERSON IN THIS OUTFIT.

FORTUNATELY, I DESTROY YOU IN THE LEGALLY-ABLE-TO-RENT-A-CAR DEPARTMENT...

DON'T INFLATE HER EGO WHEN I'M TRYING TO SCOLD HER, SPIDER-MAN--IT'S ALREADY AS ÷KKRRZZZ÷ BIG AS HER ÷KKKSSHHH÷ FATHER'S--

WHAT? WHAT'S THAT, MOM? THE STREAM OF REVERSE TACHYONS FROM THE RIFT IS SERIOUSLY CHEESING YOUR TRANSMISSION--

I WANT YOU TO ÷KKKRZZZ÷ BEHAVE LIKE YOU PROMISED TO BEFORE WE ÷KKRSSHH÷ LEFT, YOUNG LADY. YOU'RE PAST YOUR BEDTIME AND ÷KKKZZZZZ--÷

ALL OF REALITY THREATENS TO COLLAPSE INTO A SINGULARITY AND SHE'S QUIBBLING OVER OUR SLEEP CYCLES, FRANKLIN?

GIVE HER A BREAK, BENTLEY. SHE'S AN ADULT.

SHE HAS NO SENSE OF PROPORTION.

VAL...? ARRRGH!

TRYING TO RAISE A SUPER-GENIUS IS THANKLESS WORK. THANKLESS, I TELL YOU.

HONEY, MY EGO AND I WOULD LIKE YOU TO STRAP IN FOR LANDING.

BURN!

HUH. ASSUMIN' THOSE COORDINATES MY NIECE GAVE US ARE ACCURATE...

...AND THEY ALWAYS ARE...

...WE LITERALLY AIN'T BEEN TO THIS BEACH FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS, STRETCH!

I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE MISUSE "LITERALLY."

LIKE WHEN SPORTSCASTERS SAY, "HE LITERALLY HIT THAT HOME RUN INTO THE NEXT GALAXY, BOB--"

BITE MY THESAURUS, WEBS. I'M BEING LITERALLY LITERAL:

HMMM...

...THIS WAY...

ME, REED AND JOHNNY WERE ON THIS ISLAND *BEFORE*, BUT IN OLD TIMEY PIRATE TIMES!

OOOH! TIME TRAVEL! PIRATES! Y'SEE, *THIS* IS WHY I'M SO PSYCHED TO BE ON THIS TEAM! I *NEVER* GET TO DO THAT KIND OF STUFF!

AT LEAST NOT ON A *MONTHLY* BASIS...

WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT HAPPENED? *DEAR GOD, TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED!!*

UGH...IT WAS ONE OF OUR FIRST ADVENTURES...AND ONE I'D RATHER *FORGET*...

I WAS HELD HOSTAGE IN THE *PRESENT*, WATCHING DOOM STROKE HIS STUPID *TIGER*...

NOT A *EUPHEMISM*, BY THE WAY...HE ACTUALLY HAD A FREAKING *TIGER*...

DOC DOOM'S FIRST APPEARANCE IN FANTASTIC FOUR #5. --SILVER AGED STEVE

DOOMSY SENT US *MENFOLK* BACK IN TIME TO COLLECT THE TREASURE OF *BLACKBEARD*, OF ALL PEOPLE--

--WHO *I* GOT MISTAKEN FOR WHEN I WAS IN DISGUISE! THE TREASURE WAS *MINE* ALL ALONG!

DOOM BELIEVED *"BLACKBEARD'S"* GEMS HAD SOME KIND OF *MYSTIC POWER.*

RATHER THAN RISK THEM FALLING INTO HIS HANDS, WE REPLACED THEM WITH CHAINS IN THE CHEST AND SCATTERED THE GEMS TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA...

WHICH SEEMED LIKE A *GOOD SOLUTION* BY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STANDARDS...

IHOPE WEMEET PIRATESIHOPE WEMEETPIRATES IHOPEWEMEET PIRATES

REED...THERE CAN'T BE A CONNECTION BETWEEN THIS DIMENSIONAL BREACH AND BLACKBEARD'S--

PROFESSOR... *WHAT'S* ANOTHER NAME FOR *PIRATE TREASURE?*

WHAT...?

BOOTY. *B-B-BOOTY.*

HEH. BEASTIE BOYS. CLASSI--

SPLAT

HEY!

C'MERE, YOU LITTLE PISHER! I'LL *MURDERIZE* YOU!

IT'S CLOBBER--

WHOA, BENJY! "*CLOBBERING TIME*" CAN QUICKLY BECOME "*SPLATTERING TIME*" IF YOU USE YOUR STRENGTH ON NORMALS!

THESE FINE FOLKS ARE JUST ADHERING TO THE CODE OF THE VILLAGER, SAME THE WORLD OVER:

"*SEE MONSTER, DESTROY MONSTER!*"

IF YOU JUST GIVE 'EM A CHANCE, I'M SURE THEY'LL SEE YOU'RE AS LOVABLE AS A HOUSE CAT. *LOVABLER,* EVEN!

RESTRAINING BEN IS USUALLY *MY* JOB.

GLAD *PETER* IS HERE TO SHOULDER SOME OF THAT RESPONSIBILITY.

BUT WHO'S GOING TO RESTRAIN *HIM?*

STAY YOUR HANDS, MY PEOPLE!
THESE ARE NOT THE *OTHERS* WHO TORMENT US NIGHTLY!
DO YOU NOT RECOGNIZE THE FAMOUS *FANTASTIC FOUR* WHEN YOU SEE THEM?
WELL, WE GO BY *FUTURE FOUNDATION* NOW--
THE INVISIBLE GIRL!
UH...I FIND *WOMAN* LESS *PATRONIZING*, THANKS--
MR. ELONGATED MAN!
I HOPE YOU HAVE GOOD LAWYERS.
THE HUMAN TORCH!
YES. YES, THAT'S *EXACTLY* WHO I AM.
AND THE *INCREDIBLE HULK!*
URGE... TO MURDERIZE... *RETURNING...*
WE HAVE BEEN FORCED TO SEND OUR WOMEN AND CHILDREN AWAY, INTO THE INTERIOR!
WE STAY TO DEFEND OUR HOMES FROM THE LOATHSOME SEA CREATURES THAT SHAMBLE UP FROM THE DEPTHS WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN...
...ALONG WITH THE ELDRITCH SOUNDS AND STRANGE LIGHTS THAT EMANATE FROM *OLD UNCLE*, THE NEARBY MOUNTAIN...
GUUUUUUUYS!! HEY, YOU GUUUUYYYYS!
THAT *MOUNTAIN* HAS A *SKULL* ON IT!
EITHER IT'S THE LATEST ATTRACTION AT BAHAMIAN DISNEYLAND, OR *THAT'S* WHERE THE ANOMALY IS COMING FROM!
ACTUALLY, THAT'S NOT LOGICAL AT ALL.
WHO *CARES...*

"...THERE'S NO PLACE IN THE WORLD *I'D* RATHER BE!"

Empire State University Athletic Center.

GOOOOOOO MAULERS!!

AND THE MIDTOWN MAULERS TRAIL THE BROADWAY GOLDDIGGERS BY JUST A FEW POINTS...

WHUDD

OOOOHH! SERIOUS CONTACT FROM CRUSHER CARLIE ON THE DIGGERS' IRON MAVIS! THAT'S GONNA BE A PENALTY FOR SURE!

FWWEEEEEEEEE!

AS SURELY AS DAY FOLLOWS NIGHT, EH, HOWARD?

INDEED, FRANK. THIS MODERN-DAY AMAZON, THIS HIPPOLYTA IN KNEEPADS, MUST FACE IGNOMINIOUS EXILE IN YON BOX OF PENALTY BEFORE SHE MAY SKATE AGAIN AMONG THE WARRIOR PRINCESSES OF THE HARDWOOD...

IRLTY

BOO!

BOO!

BOO!

BOO!

BOO!

BOO!

YOU SUCK, COOPER!

GEEZ, COOPER, WHAT GOT INTO YOU? MAVIS CALLING YOU "BODY BAG LOVER" AGAIN?

"C.S.I'M A LOSER"?

AW...IT'S *NOTHING*, WENDY--

--JUST MY WHOLE STUPID *LIFE!*

A NEVER-ENDING PARADE OF *TWO-FACED LIARS!*

THE *LAST* GUY I WAS INTO, VIN GONZALEZ, TURNED OUT TO BE A *ROGUE COP* I EXPOSED AND HAD SENT TO RIKER'S--

--LILY HOLLISTER, THE WOMAN WHO WAS MORE OF A SISTER THAN A BEST FRIEND TO ME, LED A *DOUBLE LIFE* AS A SUPER VILLAIN, *MENACE*--

--MY OWN *FATHER* FAKED HIS DEATH TO ESCAPE HIS MOB TIES, AND I, OF COURSE, GOT *HIM* BUSTED TOO--

--AND NOW MY *CURRENT* BOYFRIEND, PETER, WHO I WAS REALLY FALLING *HARD* FOR, HAS BEEN MAKING UP PHONY BUSINESS TRIPS, TO--TO DO I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* INSTEAD!

CHEAT ON ME? BECOME A *DRUG MULE?* VISIT HIS WIFE AND KIDS IN *TOPEKA?*

I JUST DON'T KNOW WHO TO *TRUST* ANYMORE!

C'MON, *SURE* YOU DO, COOPER--YOUR *SISTERS-IN-ARMS* IN THE MIDTOWN MAULERS!

SOUNDS LIKE WE NEED TO TAKE YOU OUT FOR A NIGHT OF *MADCAP DEBAUCHERY* THAT WILL MAKE YOU FORGET ALL *ABOUT* THIS PIECE O' DIRT GUY--

"--NO MATTER *WHERE* HE IS!"

SO REED... WHAT *ARE* WE GONNA DO IF THE BREACH IS CAUSED BY BLACKBEARD'S ELDRITCH BOOTY?

BOOTY! B-B-BOOTY!

OKAY, THAT'S ALREADY GOTTEN OLD.

DANG.

WHEN VENTURING INTO THE AREA OF SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA I USUALLY CALL IN A *SPECIALIST*--AN AGATHA HARKNESS OR A STEPHEN STRANGE--

--BUT WE DON'T REALLY HAVE TIME FOR THAT. ANY *TRUE* MAGIC AFFECTS THE PHYSICAL WORLD, THOUGH, AND *THAT* I CAN DEAL WI--

HRM. MY SENSOR ARRAY HAS ALL BUT CUT OUT.

FLYING BLIND AT THE HEART OF THE STORM. NOT GOOD.

PETER, DOES YOUR *SPIDER-SENSE* DETECT ANY ELEVATED RISK?

AH...I'VE BEEN MEANING TO TELL YOU GUYS...

...I LOST MY SPIDEY-SENSE IN BATTLE RECENTLY.

WHAT? YOU'RE *DAMAGED GOODS*, KID?

FIGHTING THE SPIDER-SLAYER IN ASM #654. --STEVE SENSES TINGLING

SORRY...IT'S SOMETHING *I'VE* BEEN STRUGGLING WITH MYSELF.

PERHAPS ONCE WE RETURN TO THE BAXTER BUILDING I COULD DEVELOP A *TECHNOLOGICAL* REPLACEMENT.

THAT'D BE--WELL, *FANTASTIC*, REED!

WITHOUT IT, I FEEL SO *NAKED*.

LIKE MY EVERY *STEP* COULD BE INTO AN *OPEN MANHOLE*--

KLIK

BRNG BRNG

BRNG BRNG

BRNG BRNG

BRNG BRNG

BRNG BRNG

WUNNERFUL.

YOU'RE A GREAT ADDITION TO THE TEAM, WEBS.

RRRAAAGGGHHHH!!

A GREAT ADDITION.

ZOMG!

NOT JUST PIRATES-- BUT *ZOMBIE* PIRATES?!

SKRUNCH

SPAK

IT'S LIKE FIVE-YEAR-OLD *ME* THREW UP INSIDE MY *BRAIN! THIS* IS THE KIND OF FF ADVENTURE I WAS JONESING FOR!

THEIR BOOTY IS OUR SWEET, SUCCULENT BRAINS!

STOP SAYING BOOTY!!

GLOOP

SOMETHING ABOUT THIS... IS NOT QUITE *RIGHT*.

ARE YOU NUTS? *NOTHING* ABOUT THIS IS RIGHT!!

I SHOULD BE ABLE TO MUSTER UP ENOUGH OF A SIGNAL TO DO A QUICK SCAN FOR--

HEY!

SKATCHH

I *NEEDED* THAT!

The Baxter Building.
NEW YORK FREAKIN' CITY.
I MUST WARN YOU, MS. VALERIA...
...MY ORIGINAL DESIGNER, PROFESSOR GILBERT, RIDDLED MY ANDROID FORM WITH BOOBY-TRAPS TO FOIL JUST SUCH UNAUTHORIZED TAMPERING...
AW, YOU'RE A BIG SWEETHEART, DRAGON MAN, BUT I HACKED HIS AMATEUR-HOUR FIREWALLS RIGHT BEFORE NAP TIME WEEKS AGO.
THERE! FINISHED!
THAT TACHYON PACK SHOULD STABILIZE THE SOURCE OF THE DIMENSIONAL BREACHES!
WE'D BETTER HURRY TO TELL MOM AND DAD...
...AND THAT WE'VE CALCULATED THE OTHER RIFTS THEY'VE BEEN DEALING WITH WERE TAGGED BY SOME OUTSIDE FORCE--THEY HAVE NO NATURAL CONNECTION TO EACH OTHER...
...BUT SOMEONE CLEARLY WANTS THE FF TO THINK THEY DID!
SURELY USE OF PHONE TECHNOLOGY IS AN EASIER WAY TO BRAIN DUMP MA AND PA FANTASTIC?
PROBABLY, TONG...BUT WHY SHOULD THEY HAVE ALL THE FUN?

KEEP THEM CONTAINED INSIDE THE CAVE SO THEY CAN'T THREATEN THE VILLAGE, GUYS!

DONE AND DONE!

WHAT THE WHAT?!

AROUND THE EDGE OF THAT GIANT PORTHOLE--

BLACKBEARD'S GEMS...

NOT "*PORTHOLE*," BEN-- *PORTAL*.

THE QUESTION *IS*, DID THE UNDEAD USE THE GEMS TO BUILD THIS *RIFT*-- OR ARE THE GEMS USING *THEM*...

'TIS AS CLEAR AS THE **CALMEST SEAS**, YE YET-LIVING LUBBER...

...WE FASHIONED YON MAGICK DOOR TO SUMMON FORTH OUR LORD AND ADMIRAL **BLACKBEARD** THROUGH THE AGES TO CLAIM HIS **FLAGSHIP** AS KING OF ALL PIRATES!

WAIT--THEY WANT *BLACKBEARD* BACK? BUT ISN'T HE *YOU*-- AREN'T YOU *HIM?!*

CAN'T SAY I'M *SURPRISED*, WEBS. REED KEEPS *STIFLING* MY OBVIOUS LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL.

HUH. THEN MAYBE THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE TO *DEFUSING* THIS SITUATION...

...IS FOR YOU TO REPRISE YOUR *SIGNATURE* ROLE!

NAW-- YOU CAN'T MEAN--

YOU GOT A *BETTER* IDEA?

WHO LET YOU ON THIS TEAM AGAIN?

Mott Haven, South Bronx.

I GUESS THE *CHANGE* IN MY *POCK*EEEET WASN'T ENOOOOUGH...

WIGS

SHEINHARDT WIG

TATTOO

YOU GUYS-- YOU GUYS ARE *GREAT* TEAMMATES. AND GREAT *FRIENDS*-- AND GREAT--GREAT *PEDESTRIANS*...

NOT SURE ABOUT *THAT* ONE AFTER THE LAST, OH, *SEVEN* ROUNDS...

I CAN'T *BELIEVE* JUST WHAT A TERRIBLE *HYPOCRITE* PETER IS! HE ALWAYS ACTS SO... I DON'T KNOW, *ROLE MODEL-Y!*

LIKE HE'S HOLDS HIMSELF TO A *HIGHER STANDARD* THAN EVERYONE ELSE-- BUT THEN HE GOES AND DOES *THIS!*

HEY... CHECK IT OUT!

OOTTAT

YEAH, YOU KNOW WHAT NOT-SO-PERFECT PETER WOULD *HATE?*

HA, HA! THAT WOULD BE *AWESOME!*

YOU KNOW WHAT?

IT TOTALLY *WOULD.*

YES! BLOW HIS MIND, CARLS!

DOWN WITH PETER! DOWN WITH PETER!

TATTOO

CRUSHER CARLIE, MEET MY FAVORITE TAT ARTIST, *SYLVIA!*

MICHELANGELO WITH A NEEDLE! I TURNED MOST OF MY TORSO OVER TO HER AS HER OWN *SISTINE CHAPEL!*

DECIDED TO GRACE YOUR SKIN WITH SOME INK, HUH? WHAT BROUGHT YOU OVER TO THE DARK SIDE?

DRUNKEN REVENGE!

THAT'S 40% OF MY BUSINESS.

CHINESE CHARACTER...NO. *UNICORNS*, NO. "MOM," SERIOUSLY? PEOPLE STILL *GET* THOSE?

BUTTERFLY ABOVE THE CRACK ON MY BUTT? WHY NOT *E-Z* ON MY FOREHEAD?

OOH, OOH, *THAT* ONE! THE GOBLIN! TOTALLY!

ARE...YOU *SURE*, NOOB? THESE DAYS THAT ONE HAS A VERY... *SPECIFIC* CONNOTATION...

YES, YES! PETER *HATES* OSBORN! HE'LL HAVE A *CONNIPTION* WHEN HE SEES IT!

DON'T JUST *STAND* THERE, MICHELANGELO--

MARK ME FOR LIFE!!

WE NEED TO SHUT DOWN THAT PORTAL BEFORE IT CAUSES ANY MORE DIMENSIONAL BREACHES--

BEN AND PETER HAVE TO HELP WITH THAT!

WHERE DID THEY GO--?!

The Caribbean

AVAST, YE MAGGOTY SWABS!

TAKE A KNEE 'ROUND THE *MAST*, EVERY MAN JACK OF YOU!

YOUR ONCE AND ETERNAL *MASTER AND COMMANDER* HAS RETURNED TO FLY THE JOLLY ROGER AT LAST--

BLACKBEARD!

OI, WHAT'S ALL *THIS* THEN?

WHY ARE YE BOTHERIN' THESE FANCY PANTS BLOKES WHEN WE SHOULD BE HAVIN' A *TOT O' RUM* AND *CHASIN' BIRDS?*

Oh...

...my God.

KILL THEM!

"OI, WOT'S ALL THIS THEN?" ARE YOU CRAZY?

I--I BLANKED! I COULDN'T REMEMBER HOW I DID IT THE FIRST TIME! SO, I TRIED MY BEST JACK SPARROW!

DON'T MESS WITH THE CLASSICS!!

Outside.

THE TRACKING CHIPS INSIDE THE FF'S COSTUMES SAY THEY'RE INSIDE THAT, UH...

...REALLY, *REALLY* CHEESY SKULL CAVE!

WHO CARVES THAT KINDA THING ANYWAY?

OUR FIRST MISSION IN FIELD--BATTLE CRY, WE NEED?

IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!

THE BEN WILL APPROVE.

MOM! DAD! WE DISCOVERED--

--A WAY TO BE *GROUNDED* UNTIL YOU'RE ELIGIBLE FOR *SOCIAL SECURITY?* WHAT ARE YOU KIDS *DOING* HERE?!

DON'T *JUDGE*, MOTHER, *LISTEN!*

THE PROBLEM WITH THAT PORTAL IS *MUCH* WORSE THAN YOU *THINK*--

YOUR MOTHER'S RIGHT, VALERIA--*ZOMBIE PIRATES* AND *WEIRD LIGHTS*, IT CAN'T GET MUCH WORSE THAN *THIS!*

YOU SQUIRTS SHOULDN'T BE HERE!

ZOMBIE PIRATES?

WEIRD LIGHTS?

WHAT *IS* THIS, SCOOBY DOO?

WAIT A...

IT'D EXPLAIN A LOT, ACTUALLY.

AND IT WOULD HAVE *WORKED*, TOO...

...IF IT WASN'T FOR THOSE MEDDLING *COSMIC POWERS.*

THEY FIGURED OUT THE GAG, CHAMELEON.

THAT WAS ALWAYS THE *PLAN*, MYSTERIO.

THE ONLY *VARIABLE* WAS...

...HOW *SOON* AFTER LEARNING WOULD THEY *DIE?*

FOR SUCH IS THE FATE OF ALL THOSE...

...WHO DEFY THE SINISTER SIX!

Next:
Booty Is Kicked!
Copious Amounts Of Booty!!!

INFESTED
Stage 1:

PAY ATTENTION. CLASS IS IN SESSION. EVER HEAR OF "THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT"?

HOW GOING BACK IN TIME AND STEPPING ON *ONE* BUG COULD WIPE OUT THE PRESENT?

JUST IMAGINE, THEN, WHAT I'M ABOUT TO DO TO THE *FUTURE*.

SLITCH

HEARD ABOUT HOW EARTH'S BUMBLEBEE POPULATION TOOK A HIT? HOW IT MIGHT DESTROY OUR PLANET'S ENTIRE ECOSYSTEM?

THAT WAS ME. I DID IT FOR A LARK. JUST TO SEE IF I COULD. THIS, HOWEVER, THIS IS *WORK*.

AND AFTER MONTHS OF BEDBUG OUTBREAKS...

(YOU CAN THANK ME LATER, MANHATTAN)...

...I BELIEVE I'VE FINALLY COOKED UP THE PERFECT BATCH. THEY'RE READY.

C'MON, BABIES...

...TIME TO LEAVE THE NEST.

CLICK

KLAKK

OR SHOULD I SAY "NESTS"?

THOUSANDS OF LOCATIONS AROUND THE CITY.

CAN YOU HEAR THEM? SCURRYING?

THE PITTER PATTER OF THEIR LITTLE FEET?

NOM. NOM. NOM.

GOOD NIGHT, NEW YORK. SLEEP TIGHT.

HAVE A BITE. IT'S ON ME.

MY NAME IS MILES WARREN. AND YOU...

...ALL OF YOU...

...YOU ARE MY SCIENCE EXPERIMENT.

BUG TIME

WRITTEN BY DAN SLOTT
ART BY BARRY KITSON
COLOR BY EDGAR DELGADO
LETTERS BY VC'S CARAMAGNA

MARVEL TEAM-UP FEATURING:

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

GHOST RIDER

Previously: Spider-Man thought it was going to be a boring evening when he joined Ghost Rider for a drink (milk, neat). But when the demon Servicer showed up looking to take Ghost Rider's bike and ended up absorbing Ghost Rider into his chest instead, the Web-Slinger learned that with great horsepower must also come great responsibility.

CAN'T GET THE SERVICE PART TWO

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JOE QUESADA — CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER
DAN BUCKLEY — PUBLISHER
ALAN FINE — EXEC. PRODUCER

DE LA TORRE AND HOLLINGSWORTH - COVER

Manhattan.

DON'T...

...PLEASE.

THAT'S ALL I HAVE. I SWEAR.

SHOULDN'T BE OUT THIS LATE 'LESS YOU CAN PAY YOUR WAY. AND WHAT YOU HOLDING HERE *AIN'T* GONNA CUT IT.

STREETS BE DANGEROUS.

LOTTA SIN OUT HERE. DEBTS TO PAY.

LOTTA PAIN.

HEY!

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!

YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE CAN CAUSE PAIN?

RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!

THWIPP!

HUH?

GETTING HIT BY A SENTIENT SATANIC MOTORBIKE!!

THWIPP!

WHICH IS NOT A '70s HEAVY METAL ALBUM TITLE, DESPITE REALLY NEEDING TO BE!!

SO GET OUTTA THE WAY!

SPIDERY SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE COMING THROUGH!

SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE FINANCIAL ADVICE...?

INVEST THIS. POSSIBLY IN BONDS.

I DON'T, FOR THE LIFE OF ME, UNDERSTAND WHY GHOST RIDER DOESN'T DRIVE A CAR THESE DAYS. IT'S SIMPLY A *FAR* SAFER MEANS OF TRANSPORT.

SOMETHING WARM AND COMFY. A TOYOTA PRIUS, MAYBE.

ALTHOUGH IT'D HAVE TO BE A CONVERTIBLE, THINKING ABOUT IT, OR HIS FLAMING SKULL WOULD SET FIRE TO THE CEILING.

A BADLY CHARRED ROOF INTERIOR COULD SERIOUSLY HARM THE SELL-ON VALUE OF A PRIUS.

I'LL BE SURE TO INFORM GHOST RIDER OF THIS. IF HE EVER ESCAPES FROM THE TORSO OF THAT ENORMOUS DEMON DUDE HE WAS JUST SUCKED INTO.

BRRRRRRR. THAT MAY BE THE CREEPIEST THING I'VE SEEN DOC OCK TRIED TO WOO AUNT MAY WITH OCTOPUS-RELATED LOVE POETRY.

AH! THE OCTOWOOING! IT HAUNTS ME...

...STILL.

OH BOY.

GUESS I'M DOING LAUNDRY TONIGHT AFTER ALL.

GO!!

DON'T LET HIM GET THE...

MMMMPPHHH...

THE BIKE. I KNOW. I KNOW.

MY LAUNDRY CONCURS!

SKREEEEEEEEEEEEE!

THWARRRRRLLLLRRRRP!

COME ON! FAAASTERRRRRR...

"I'M GONNA HIT THE HIGHWAY LIKE A BATTERING RAM ON A SILVER BLACK PHANTOM BIKE..."

BOY, SINGING MEAT LOAF IS REALLY NOT GOING TO HELP MY STREET CRED IN THE CROWDED 21ST CENTURY SUPER HERO MARKE--

WOAAAAH!

SKREEEEEEEEEEEEE!

OKAY.

THAT KIND OF LIMITS MY RUNNING AWAY OPTIONS.

THE... BIKE.

WHAT A FACE! AND I'M THE ONE WHO WEARS A MASK?

OKAY THEN...

IF YOU WANT THE BIKE...

...YOU CAN HAVE IT AT *HIGH SPEED!!!*

THAT SOUNDED SUITABLY MACHO, RIGHT?

Y'KNOW...

...I THINK ALL THIS IS ACTUALLY MAKING ME MISS THE SPIDER-MOBILE.

AND I *NEVER* THOUGHT I'D SAY THAT.

CHICKEN! *BWAK-CLUCK,* ETC.

YOU'LL RELEASE THE BIKE AND GET OUTTA THE WAY LAST SECOND.

RIGHT?

RRRRRRRRRRR!

OR MAYBE NOT...

RRRRRRRRRRRRRR!

THOOOOMMM!

HEY! GHOST RIDER'S BACK! AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU.

I BET YOU DON'T GET THAT A LOT, RIGHT?

THUMP!

TRULY, I AM THE SOLVER OF SUPERNATURAL PROBLEMS. JUST CALL ME PETE VENKMAN.

MANHATTAN IS SAVED. CATS AND DOGS WILL *NOT* BE LIVING TOGETHER...

...I TOLD YOU...

DON'T LET HIM GET THE BIKE!

EEP. SINGEING THE MASK.

BUT I HAVE SUCCESSFULLY SAVED THE DAY WITH ADEPT SUPERHEROICS.

LOOK...

...OVER...

OH...

THAT'S KINDA DISAPPOINTING.

YEAH...

DAMN STRAIGHT.

IS HE...

...MERGING WITH YOUR BIKE?

"SOME KINDA MEGA MONSTER MOTORBIKE."

RRRRAAAIIIEEEEEEEEEE!!

YEAH...

OKAY, THEN.

NO OFFENSE...

BUT I AM *NEVER* GOING FOR A DRINK WITH YOU AGAIN.

End Of Part Two

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAIL

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Sorry to say we're crazy busy this week in the Spidey office, so I won't have time to respond to your letters, but we have a million of them here about the new Venom's debut in #654 and many other topics. So for this week, no peppy comments from me…just, you the undistilled, selectively edited FAN!

Enjoy your ramblings. Beginning with a never before attempted feat! Letters from two brothers printed in an the same issue of Spidey! History is made!

Amazing Spider-Guys,

There is always debate among every *Amazing Spider-Man* fan as to which issues would appear on their top ten favorite issues of ASM. Very rarely will the newer issues appear on that list. #654 is so amazing that it instantly makes it on that list. First off, here's my list just to show where this issue stands.

1. #39
2. #121
3. #1
4. #36 (#477)
5. #654
6. #400
7. #200
8. #252
9. #149
10. #545

This issue was indeed amazing for many reasons. First off, I loved Alistair Smythe and Scorpion's partnership as they have a mutual hatred for Jameson. Secondly, it was totally unpredictable! I was afraid someone was going to die, but I didn't expect it to be Marla Madison. Perhaps the most important reason of all time, that dwarfs the other reasons, is the first appearance of the new Venom. Its amazing how far the alien symbiote has come since its bonding with Spider-Man during the Secret Wars, to its separation, to its bonding with Eddie Brock, to its separation, to the bonding of Mac Gargan, to the separation and now to the bonding of Flash Thompson. Do we sense a pattern?

Please don't make Flash get rid of the symbiote! I love this Venom already! Why? First off, the host isn't someone that was introduced the same time as the first Venom and it wasn't a super-villain that Spidey has fought before, but it was a supporting character that was one of the few people who actually supported Spider-Man's heroism. I specifically loved Flash wanting to be called Spider-Man and not Venom. It reminds me of the time when he was Spider-Man waaaaaaaaaay back in issue #5.

I can hardly wait until #654.1 where I'm sure it'll knock out #545 out of my list! I'm also looking forward to the new Venom series. How long is this series supposed to be? That's all I got for you. This new Venom is the bomb!

Alex Galucki
Via e-mail

Hey Marvel guys,

My brother writes to you all the time, and he was mentioned in one issue. Coincidentally, it was about Flash Thompson. I just got issue #654 and I couldn't believe it! The fact that the high school hero is now the deadly Venom! I kind of had thoughts that he would be Black Ops Venom for several reasons:

1. The description of Venom
2. The fact that it said he was an American hero
3. He is a supporting character
4. The picture of Venom showed him with no legs, but the symbiote was forming legs

However, I did catch one fault (and yes I'm going for a No-Prize!). In the issue, Flash/Venom said, "Why can't I be Spider-man? There're two Hulks, two Caps, why can't there be two--". We all know he was going to say two Spider-men. There were two Spider-men. In fact, there were more than two. Ben Reilly became Spider-man for a little while. Plus you have Kaine, Spidercide and a whole bunch of other clones of Spider-man. Not to mention the fact that Flash was Spider-man way back in ASM #5. Is that No-Prize worthy for you?

Thanks for the great issue! I love the artwork by Stefano Caselli and the amazing ink job in the battle between Scorpion and Spidey. And who could forget the plot by Dan Slott. Thanks to everyone else in case I didn't mention your name. Can't wait to get #654.1 and Venom #1.

Adam Galucki
Via e-mail

Dear Marvel,

Re: ASM #654

I would like to cast a vote for Marte Gracia to win an award. Not because the colors of this issue are amazing, but because page eight all by itself is the best looking single page I've seen. Ever. The washed amber sky, cobalt blue spidey-sense, and lime green against gray spaceship created eye-candy so mesmerizing that I lost 10 minutes of my life staring at it. Not to mention a few flip-backs. Gorgeous job, Marte. Thank you,

Will Robertson
North Hollywood, CA

Hello Spidey folks,

I've been reading *Amazing Spider-Man* on/off since Brand New Day, which was released shortly after I returned to reading comics. I was happy to hear the comic slowing it down a bit into a bi-weekly schedule with a more consistent creative team. I didn't realize until after reading ASM #648 that I might not like the idea of Dan Slott being the book's head writer. His last few issues of writing have been…cheesy. They remind me of some of the writing the Spidey books endured in the late '90s. They're not THAT bad, but I'm starting to get worried that they'll get close to it.

The thing is that I do like Slott's plotting. A lot. I love that Peter is finally finding success using that brain of his that invented web shooters. I like that he now has the ability to build suits for individual purposes (but please no return of the Web-Armor Spidey). I like Venom and Flash Thompson being brought into the forefront. I like that Peter's cast of characters are moving forward in their lives. I like the Hobgoblin becoming a major villain again (and am even willing to give the flaming sword a chance!). And yet even with all those things currently happening in the book, I'm not really enjoying *Amazing Spider-Man*. So rather than complaining to my (very, very patient) girlfriend after reading issues #654 and #654.1, I felt like shooting y'all a message instead.

I saw that Fred Van Lente wrote the script for #654 and I enjoyed it in spite of its silly premise. After all, part of what makes Spider-Man so great is his ability to star in roles either ridiculous or serious. #654 was oddly both. But the Venom back-up--well let's just say I realized it wasn't written by Van Lente the moment Flash, while wearing the Venom symbiote, was flipped upside down by Katherine after he hit on her. It was such a corny scene and scenes similar to it are so often done whenever a writer wants to quickly let us know a certain female character is tough. It's stale.

Issue #654.1 has dialogue like "Ah! Mr. Heisman, the infamous American financier," and scenes where Venom bites off somebody's arm. Was the latter scene supposed to be an homage to Warren Ellis' Thunderbolts run and I'm just too dense to get it? Because it came across to me as another tired scene. And I'm not too keen on a lot of the pop culture jokes Spider-Man's been quipping but like most humor that's just a matter of personal taste not really a complaint.

I don't want to send a message that sounds like my sole purpose is to bash the writing of a man I've never met. So I went online to remind myself of the work Dan Slott's done that I've read and enjoyed like *Marvel Comics Presents, Arkham Asylum: Living Hell, Avengers: Initiative,* and a lot of his other ASM issues. I also saw some photos of him posing with fans at various conventions and he looks like a nice guy, so please don't think I'm trying to be jerk. I don't want to see Dan Slott removed from the book and forced to write the Many Loves of Rocket Raccoon miniseries. There have just been a few things in recent ASM issues that are bothering me and ranting on internet message boards about it seems kinda stupid when I could simply message your offices. I think the book overall is heading in the right direction but that the individual issues could be better done.

Peter MacPherson
Orlando, FL

P.S. Can you please re-name Anti-Venom? Eddie Brock may not be too bright and a bit nuts, but he's always been pretty good at playing it cool. And "Anti-Venom" is about as cool a name as "Spidercide". Also, maybe tweak his look a bit too? Or at least feed him.

Dear Spider-Team,

I've just finished reading *Amazing Spider-Man* #654. Dan Slott's plot is masterful, Fred Van Lente's script sounds real, and Stefano Caselli's art is beautiful. Great issue! But where is Spidey's new stealth suit? It could have been extremely useful in this issue; it would certainly have turned the tables around in Spider-Man's favor. Did it have a limited life expectation? Did Peter Parker design it to last only until, and no later than February 2011? Did Peter ever go out crime-fighting without his web-shooters ever since he designed them? Did Dan think the groovy and amazingly useful stealth suit he conceived was suddenly corny and useless?

No, this is simply another dumb editorial decision: "We can't have Spider-Man running around without his original costume! The readers won't recognize him! Waste the stealth costume! We'll only use it once in a while, etcetera…" At the very least you could have had Peter incorporate the mechanism in his original costume. But no! Peter has to stick to the basics, not evolve, and remain 25 years old for the next 50 years, blah blah blah — the same old dirge.

Once in a blue moon, someone comes up with a NEW and BRILLIANT idea and you have to terminate it. You guys are pathetic. Why am still buying this stuff, anyway?

Jimmy Djem
Geneva, Switzerland

Thanks for writing, everyone! More overdone pop culture references, cheesy stories and pathetic editorial mandates on the way in two weeks. Plus artists Mike McKone and Lee Garbett stop by and we get more on Infested : the lead-in to this summer's incredible Spidey epic : SPIDER-ISLAND !

Viva Gaga!
Simperin' Steve
4/1/11

NEXT!

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(please mark as OKAY TO PRINT)